

LETTER OF THE WEEK CURRICULUM

hands-on lessons
for preschool

by Anna Geiger, M.Ed.
of The Measured Mom®



PREVIEW

If you have specific questions about this letter of the week curriculum, I'm happy to answer them!

You may reach me at
anna@themeasuredmom.com.

What is Letter of the Week?

Traditional Letter of the Week programs teach the letters of the alphabet in order from A-Z. Each week, many of the class's activities focus only on that letter. Letters are taught in isolation, and lessons are the same for every student.

Some early childhood educators are actually moving away from a Letter of the Week focus. Here's why:

- Many children do not learn their alphabet in sequential order, from A-Z. They may forget letters taught at the beginning of the sequence or become bored when they recognize all the letters just a month into the curriculum.
- Children need to see letters in context and not merely in isolation.
- Letter of the Week may not include important elements of an early childhood literacy program, such as phonemic and phonological awareness, concepts of print, and language development.

How is this program different?

I find that the structure of a Letter of the Week program is useful for parents teaching their children at home, and in preschool programs where the majority of the children do not know their full alphabet and sounds. For that reason, I've chosen a Letter of the Week approach.

However, you'll find that these lessons are unlike traditional Letter of the Week plans in these ways:

1. You're encouraged to choose your own order for teaching the letters. Start with the letters of your child's name, or in a preschool class start with the letters that are easiest to write. The lessons work no matter what order you choose.
2. You're encouraged to choose only the activities that fit the needs of your child or students. If an activity isn't the right fit for any reason, skip it.
3. Each week's lessons have at least two "whole alphabet" activities.
4. Lessons aren't limited to alphabet knowledge. You'll also find suggestions for teaching concepts of print, phonemic and phonological awareness, and more.
5. The lessons are easy to modify for differing ability levels. In fact, you'll often find ways to adapt a lesson for a child who needs it simpler, as well as ways to challenge students who are ready for the next step.
6. While you'll find printed activities, there is a strong focus on hands-on learning rather than worksheets. Nearly all the printables do not require a pencil. Instead, you'll find playful ways to strengthen those fine motor muscles.
7. The lesson plans are just part of the package! You'll love **the appendix**, which is bursting with a variety of preschool activities—from fine motor and name activities to preschool science experiments.

For Parents

1. Set a routine. Carve out 30-45 minutes 4-5 days a week to do learning activities with your child. It may work best to choose a consistent schedule when your child is at his best. For you this may be after the breakfast table is cleared. Or it may be when a younger sibling is napping. Each week includes four days of activities with optional bonus activities.

2. Decide where to begin. If your child knows very few letters, I encourage you to start with the letters of his name. These letters are the most meaningful to him, making them a wonderful place to start. For children who recognize their names and a handful of other letters, going in order from A-Z may be the right choice. If your child already recognizes most of his alphabet and demonstrates the ability to use a pencil correctly, consider starting with the letters that are easiest to write. For the uppercase letters, I recommend this order: E, F, H, I, L, T, V, W, X, K, M, N, Y, A, Z, C, O, G, Q, B, D, J, P, U, R, S.

3. Prepare the lessons for the week. Look through the suggested activities for a particular letter. Choose the ones you think will work best for your family. Print and assemble the printables you'd like to use, purchase any needed supplies, reserve library books, and put them all together in a bin. The more prepared you are, the more likely you are to do the activities. It's best to plan ahead by a week or two so you can be sure to get your materials in time.

4. Be flexible. Your child may not be interested in the craft project you prepared. You may spend 20 minutes getting a sensory activity ready, and your child spends two minutes with it. Or you're finally having such beautiful weather that you can't bear to sit at the table. It's okay.

Each week, you learn more about the activities that resonate with your child. You learn what your child needs work on and what's too easy for him. Keep that in mind as you choose the following week's activities.

If you have a week of sickness or vacation, just pick up where you left off. And if you have a week where you do no structured learning activities beyond reading aloud, you've still done wonderful things.

5. Let your child play. These activities should represent only a tiny part of your day with your child. Most of his day should be spent in free play with open-ended activities like using building toys, playing house, looking at books, or getting outside.

For Teachers

- 1. How is this ebook intended to serve preschool teachers?** You'll find this book to be a huge timesaver when doing your weekly plans. As you look for resources to teach the alphabet, refer to this book first. You'll find a huge variety of hands-on ideas in the weekly lesson plans. (Not to mention the appendix. You are going to *love* the appendix.)

Be aware, however, that this book is not a complete preschool curriculum. I would never presume to dictate your schedule or the exact activities that your students need. As your students' teacher, you are the *only* one qualified to decide what works best for your unique situation. And as you well know, one activity rarely works for every student. Most importantly, only a small part of a preschooler's day should be academic. Students should be given a great deal of time for free play.

- 2. Look at the suggested activities in the daily plans and determine how to weave them into your days.** These lessons are designed for a 4-day program with optional bonus activities, but it's possible that you have a 2-day or 3-day program with your preschool class. Where might you fit the suggested activities?

Do you begin with circle time? You may choose one of the featured rhymes to sing or one of the books to read.

Do you have centers? Many of the math and fine motor activities will work perfectly.

Which activities work best for the whole class? Schedule those into your week.

- 3. Make sure you have a well-rounded program.** Are these elements a part of your preschool day? If not, read the linked articles and consider adding them!

Morning message

- *Morning Message* by Pre-K Pages (how, why, and when to do it) - <http://bit.ly/1FEIYNB>

Circle Time

- *10 Tips for Circle Time* in the Preschool Classroom by Teach Preschool - <http://bit.ly/1iOr5tp>
- *Circle Time* by Pre-K Pages <http://bit.ly/1eIAwbR>

Centers

- *An introduction to Centers in Preschool* by Fun-a-Day - <http://bit.ly/1LmGpjd>
- *Centers for Preschool, Pre-K and Kindergarten* by Pre-K Pages - <http://bit.ly/2ljaEmi>
- *Photos of Centers* by Prekinders - <http://bit.ly/1KpVzqT>
- *Dramatic play ideas* by Prekinders - <http://bit.ly/1F9Eycz>
- *Dramatic play themes* by Pre-K Pages - <http://bit.ly/1FThWh>

Journal writing

- *How to teach Journal Writing in Preschool* by The Measured Mom (<http://bit.ly/1hW1L8A>)
- *10 Tips for Keeping a Journal in Preschool* by Teach Preschool (<http://bit.ly/JPT44Q>)
- *Writing Workshop* by Pre-K Pages - <http://bit.ly/1EoH2n2>

- 4. Only choose the activities that work for you and your students.** If something is too messy, too easy, too challenging, or just not the right fit, skip it. You're the expert!

The Activities

The activities in the lesson plans are labeled with images so that you can find what you're looking for at a glance. Need a fine motor activity? Looking for something that will review the whole alphabet? Want something that will get the kids moving? Just refer to the icons next to each activity.

Of course, you'll also want a heavy focus on social-emotional skills with your preschoolers in the classroom or at home. Self-control, sharing, conflict resolution, and independence are just some of the skills you'll want to help your children develop. One of the best ways to develop these social skills is through pretend play. You'll find a suggested pretend play center on the introduction page for each letter. There's no need to set up a new center every week; in fact, children benefit from having the same center for several weeks at a time.

Enjoy these activities, and be sure to check the appendix for hundreds more!



Crafts

You'll find this label next to activities that qualify as crafts. These are simple activities where the end result is very much the same for all students. They may include cutting, pasting, and/or gluing.



Process art

These are open-ended art activities. When your child begins the project, you don't have a specific idea of what the finished product will look like. If you teach a preschool class, you'll see a big variety of projects when you display the artwork.



Fine motor

These activities involve the small muscles of the hand. They may involve manipulating small pieces, playing with dough, or cutting and gluing.



Whole alphabet

It's important to include whole alphabet activities in your Letter of the Week program. You'll find at least two of these for every letter.



Math

When you see this icon you'll know that the activity teaches a simple math concept.



Read aloud

You'll find many free books to print as well as suggested library books to go with each letter. You'll also find accompanying activities that will build phonemic and phonological awareness as well as concepts of print.



Sensory play

When an activity involves two or more senses, it will have this label. Sensory play is often messy and usually fun. Play dough activities, science experiments, and the like fall under this umbrella.



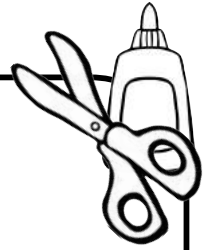
Gross motor

If an activity requires your child to get up and move, you'll see this icon. It's a great one to look for when you have a child who learns best when he's active.

SAMPLE LESSONS

*The following pages are for Letter Aa. The other letters follow a similar format, but you will find different printables for each letter.

Letter Aa



Supply List*

Art supplies: do-a-dot markers, construction paper, glue, tempera paint, scissors

Printables: pages 95-105

Books: *Apple Pie ABC* (by Alison Murray), *A Was Once an Apple Pie* (by Edward Lear), *Alligators All Around* (by Maurice Sendak), *The Lady with the Alligator Purse* (by Nadine Bernard Westcott)

Other: Red or green play dough, 1-inch round red office stickers, a variety of small toy animals, apples, toothpicks, poker chips, foam letters, sticky notes, dry oats (and other supplies for a sensory bin), liquids for a science experiment (such as water, vinegar, and oil), linking cubes

*Please read through the lessons before gathering your supplies. You may wish to skip some activities or substitute different materials.



Suggested Books

- *There's an Alligator under My Bed*, by Mercer Mayer
- *Are You an Ant?* by Judy Allen and Tudor Humphries
- *The Icky Sticky Anteater*, by Dawn Bentley
- *Hurray for Amanda and Her Alligator*, by Mo Willems
- *An Anteater Named Arthur*, by Bernard Waber
- *Apple Farmer Annie*, by Monica Wellington
- *Baby Alligator*, by Ginjer L. Clarke
- *Zack's Alligator*, by Shirley Mozelle
- *Apples, Apples, Apples*, by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
- *How to Make an Apple Pie and See the World*, by Marjorie Priceman
- *Hey, Little Ant*, by Philip & Hannah Hoose
- *Ten Apples Up on Top*, by Dr. Seuss
- *The Apple Pie Tree*, by Zoe Hall
- *The Lady with the Alligator Purse*, by Nadine Bernard Westcott
- *Apple Pie ABC*, by Alison Murray

Dramatic Play Idea

Set up a pretend airport in your living room or classroom.

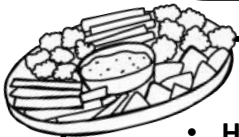
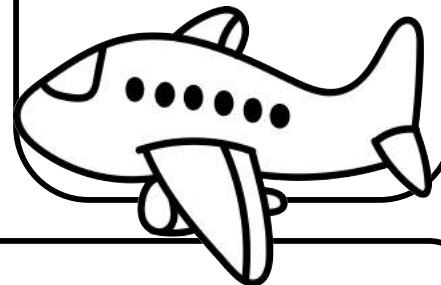
Get inspiration here:

No Time for Flashcards

<http://bit.ly/1rBESy9>

Play to Learn Preschool

<http://bit.ly/1CeYgsQ>



Snack Ideas

- **Healthy snack ideas:** apples, applesauce, almonds, ants on a log (celery sticks w/ peanut butter & raisins)
- **Packaged snacks:** animal crackers, Alphabits cereal
- **Food to make together:** apple pie, alphabet soup, crockpot applesauce

1) Little book of songs and rhymes

Read and sing the Little Letter Aa Book (**pages 95-96**) to your learners. If they're interested, read and sing it a few more times. Make up simple actions for some of the songs. March with the ants, fly with the airplane, and grow with the apple tree. Give each of them their own copy to keep.

To assemble, print front to back. Then cut across the horizontal center. Fold to make a little book. Staple on the fold with a long-arm stapler.

2) "A is for apple" dot page

Print our letter A dot page (**page 97**) and give your learners dot stickers, clear counters, do-a-dot markers, or another round manipulative to fill in the circles. As they work, say the letter's sound. "A! /ă/, /ă/, apples."

Adapt: Take turns placing the manipulatives. Let your learners stop whenever they'd like, even if the page is not complete.

3) Apple tree play dough math

Print the apple tree play dough mat (**page 98**). Then grab a ball of red or green play dough. Have your learners roll a die and make that many apple play dough balls to put on the tree. Keep adding apples until the tree is full.

4) Apple tree letter matching

Use the blank apple tree printable (**page 99**). Write a letter in each circle. Then write corresponding letters on round red office stickers. Have your learner match the stickers to the letters you've written on the tree. To make it more challenging, have learners match upper and lowercase letters. To make it very easy, write an A on every circle and sticker.

5) Read

Read one or more of these letter-A themed alphabet books.

- *Apple Pie ABC*, by Alison Murray
- *A Was Once an Apple Pie*, by Edward Lear
- *Alligators All Around*, by Maurice Sendak

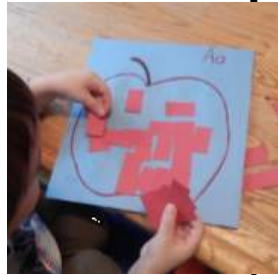
1) My Aa Book

Print, cut apart, and staple My Aa Book (pages 100-101). Read it to your child. Point to the words as you read. Next, encourage your child to “read” it himself.

To assemble, print front to back. Then cut across the horizontal center. Fold to make a little book. Staple on the fold with a long-arm stapler.

2) Apple craft with paper squares

Draw a simple apple shape on a piece of construction paper and provide your child with small red or green paper squares. Have him glue the squares onto the apple shape.



Apple craft

Alternate activity:

Older preschoolers may enjoy the challenge of making a large alligator out of construction paper and paper circles. Learn how to make it at Little Family Fun - <http://bit.ly/1ELS863>

3) Toy animal Sort

Gather toy animal figures or stuffed animals, and invite your child to sort them. Some ideas for sorting: big/small, farm/zoo, pet/wild, land/water, etc.

Challenge:

Some children may be able to sort by animal group: fish, birds, mammals, reptiles, etc.



Alligator craft

4) Read and rhyme

Read *The Lady with the Alligator Purse* , by Nadine Bernard Westcott. As you get to each rhyming pair, leave out the second word to see if your child or class can figure it out.

Miss Lucy had a baby; his name was Tiny Tim.
She put him in the bathtub to see if he could _____. (swim)

He drank up all the water, he ate up all the soap.
He tried to eat the bathtub, but it wouldn't fit down his _____. (throat)
(this is actually a slant rhyme, but it still counts!)

etc.

1) Letter sound cut & paste

Print the upper or lowercase block A and pictures (**page 102-103**). Have your learners cut out the pictures and glue them onto the letter as you name them and emphasize their sound.

Adapt: Cut out the pictures for your learners and apply the glue if necessary.

2) Apple stamping

Cut apples in half and have your learners dip them in paint and make prints on paper. If an apple is slippery, stick a fork in it and have your learner use the fork as a handle.

3) Letter A sound cover

Print the letter A sound cover page (**page 104**). Give your learners poker chips or circles cut with a large circle punch. Name each picture together, emphasizing the beginning sound. Cover the pictures that start with the short a sound.

Adapt: If your learners aren't ready for this yet, use the page as a vocabulary builder. Name pictures and have them cover them.

4) Alphabet Relay

Grab a set of foam letters and two containers. Get your learners moving and practicing letter recognition at the same time with an alphabet relay game. Learn more at Mom Inspired Life. <http://bit.ly/1tqcttO>



Apple stamping

1) Build with apples

Cut apples into small pieces, and give your learners flat toothpicks to build with. Get inspiration at Fun at Home with Kids. <http://bit.ly/1EMI9j8>

2) Sticky note name

Write the letters of your learner’s name on individual sticky notes. Then display the name on a large piece of paper. Can your learner put the sticky notes underneath each letter of his/her name? Another idea is to cover each letter of the name with the corresponding sticky note.

3) Simple apple pie sensory bin

Fill a bin with dry oats, real or play apples, and other simple props. Invite your learners to play in the oats and make their own “apple pie.” Learn more at Stir the Wonder. <http://bit.ly/1KSsEbT>

4) Read

Choose from our letter A book list or books from your own collection. Read as long as your learners have interest!

Bonus Activities

Rotting apple science experiment

Try a rotting apple science experiment. Put apples in different liquids and note what happens to them at the end of the week. Get the full tutorial at Gift of Curiosity - <http://bit.ly/1KSvj5k>

Measure toy animals

Gather toy animal figures and linking cubes. Have your learners guess how many cubes long each animal is. Then measure by stacking the cubes and placing them next to the animal. Record their estimates and measurements on the printable (**page 105**).

Challenge: If your learners are already writing letters and numbers, invite them to do some or all of the recording on the sheet.

Letter Aa Printables



Remember to print the *Little Letter Aa Book* and *My Aa Book* **front to back**. Cut across the horizontal center of the page. Then fold and put the pages together to make a little book. Staple on the fold with a long arm stapler.

A is for Apple tree

(tune: Itsy Bitsy Spider)



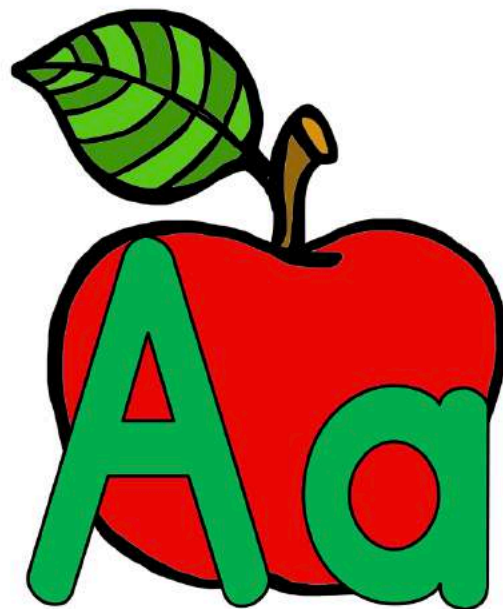
Once a little apple seed
Was planted in the ground.
Down came the raindrops,
Falling all around.
Out came the big sun,
Bright as bright could be.
And that little apple seed
Grew into a tree!

A is for Airplane

(tune: I'm a Little Teapot)



I'm a little airplane, I wish I could fly!
Here I go in my engine, I go so high.
When I get all the way up, then I fly
Lift off the runway and pop into the sky!

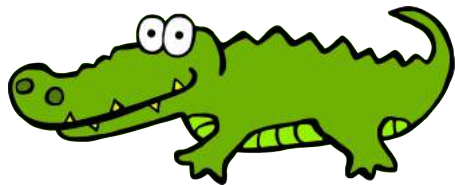


Can you find the A?

Little Letter Aa Book

© themeasuredmom.com

A is for Alligator



Five little monkeys swinging in a tree
Teasing Mr. Alligator,
"You can't catch me!"
Along comes Mr. Alligator
As quiet as can be
And snaps a monkey
Right out of that tree!

Four little monkeys

A is for Aiken Drum

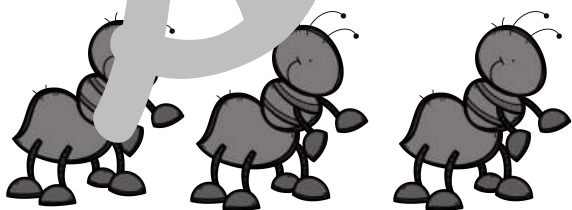


There was a man who lived in the moon,
Lived in the moon, lived in the moon.
There was a man who lived in the moon,
And his name was Aiken Drum.

And he played upon a fiddle, a fiddle.
And he played up and down the fiddle,
And his name was Aiken Drum.

And his hat was made of swiss cheese ...
And his shoes were made of spinach ...
And his buttons were made of popcorn

for ants



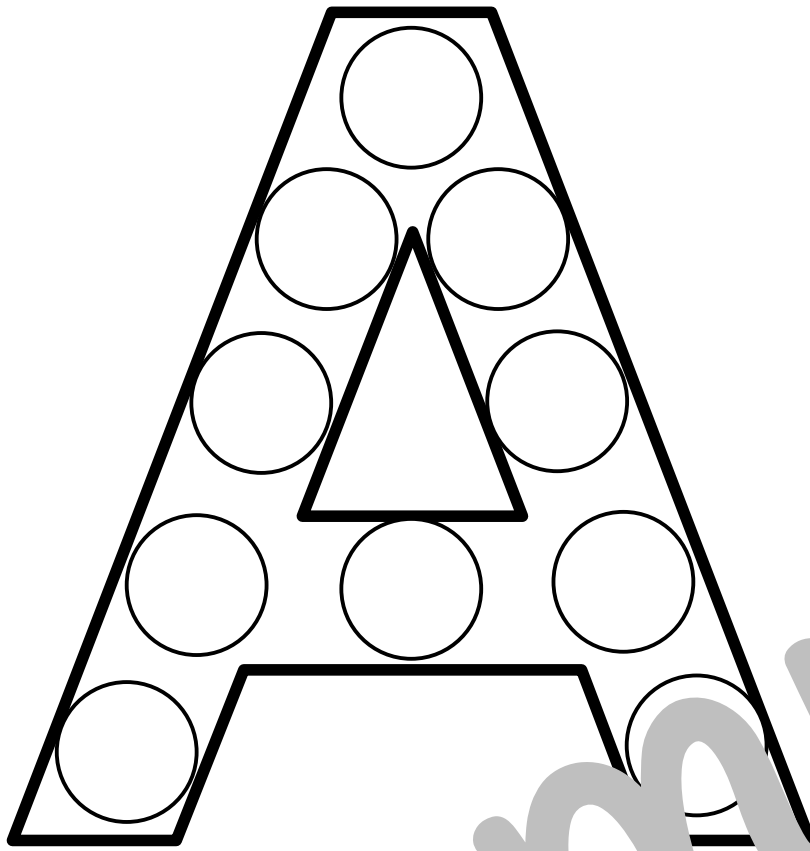
The ants go marching one by one,
Hurrah. Hurrah.
The ants go marching one by one,
Hurrah. Hurrah.
The ants go marching one by one,
The little one stops to suck his thumb,
And they all go marching down
Into the ground to get out of the rain.
BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

A is for Apple

(tune: Mary Had a Little Lamb)



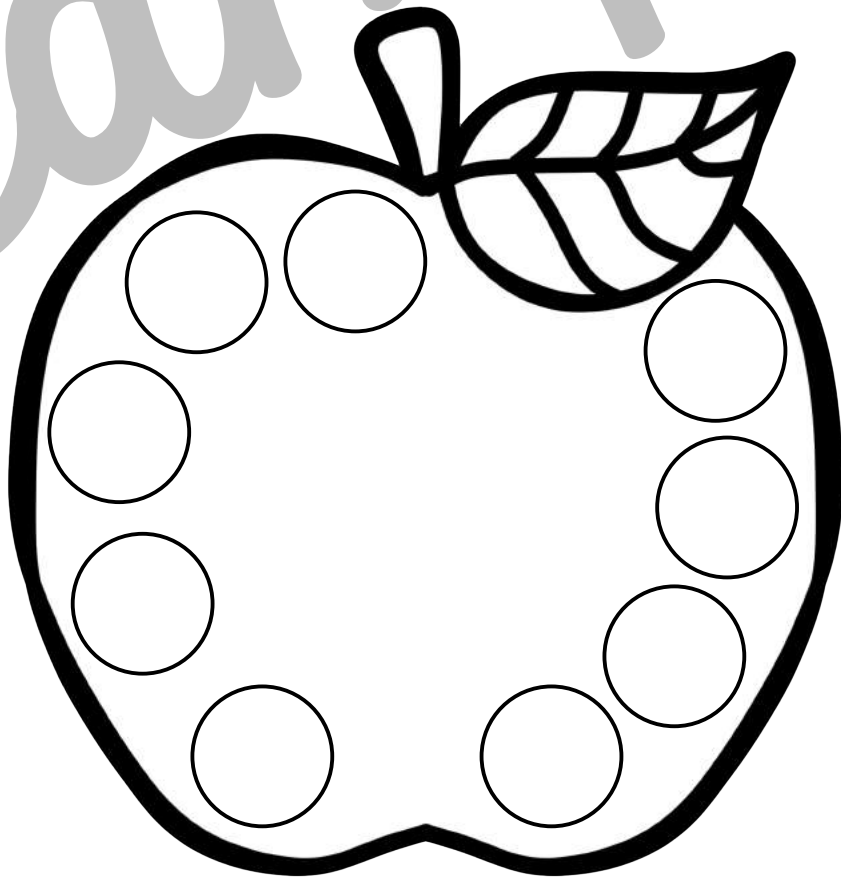
Apple starts with letter A,
Letter A, Letter A.
Apple starts with letter A,
ă, ă, ă, ă!



is for

apple

Use dot markers, dot markers, or small manipulatives to cover the circles.



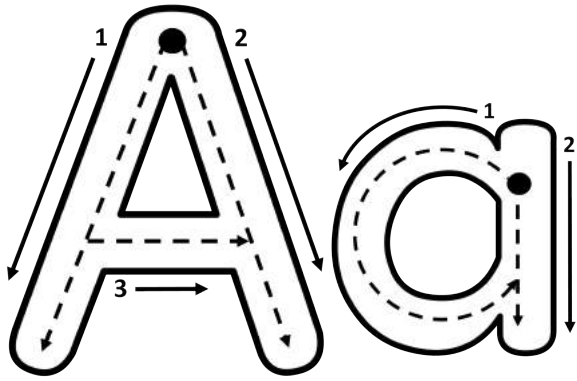


Roll a die and
add play
dough apples!



Apple Tree Letter Matching

Your teacher will write a letter in each apple as well as on a set of round stickers. Match the stickers to the apples.



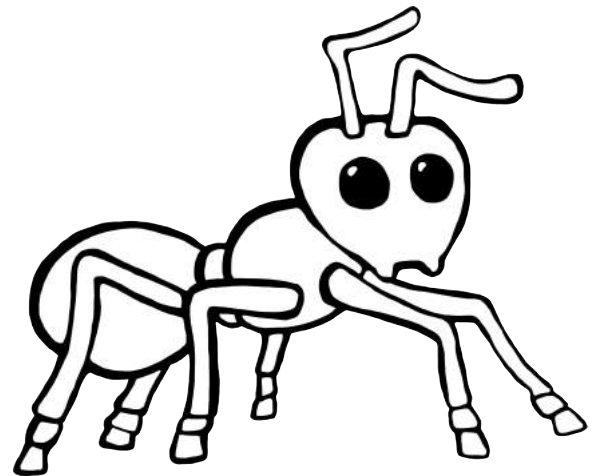
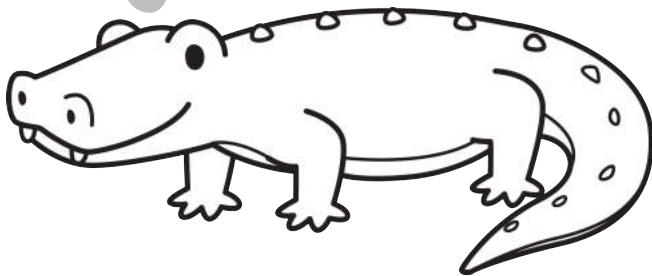
My Aa

Book

Trace it!

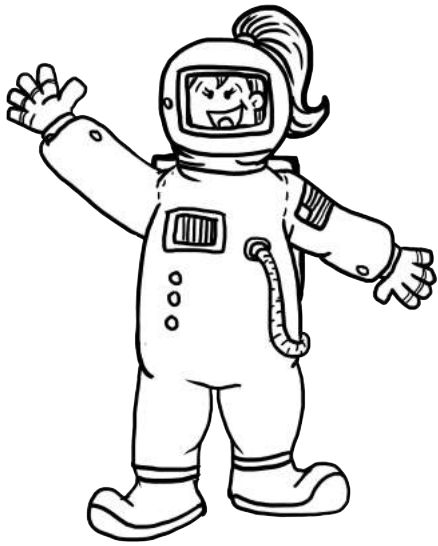
© Geiger – themeasuredmom.com
Letter of the Week Curriculum

sample



alligator

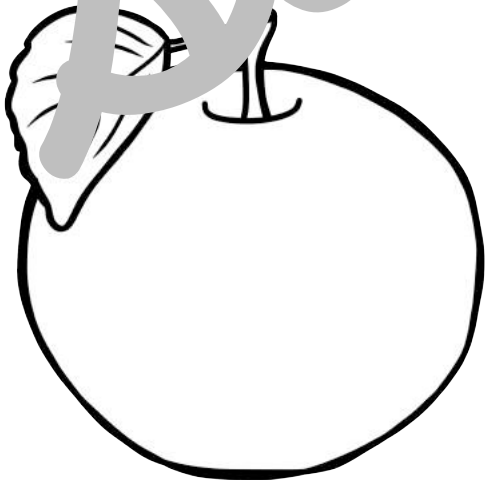
ant



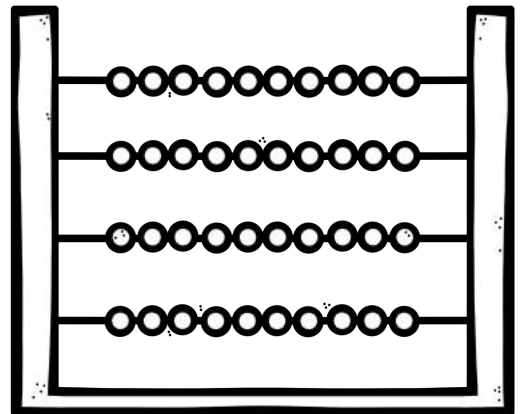
astronaut



ax



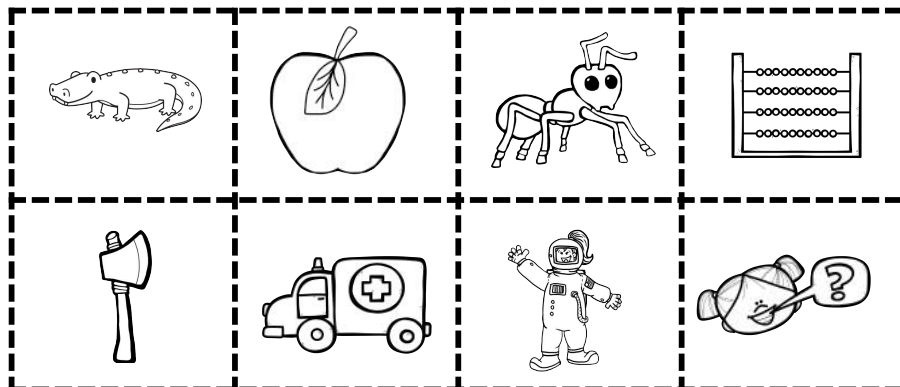
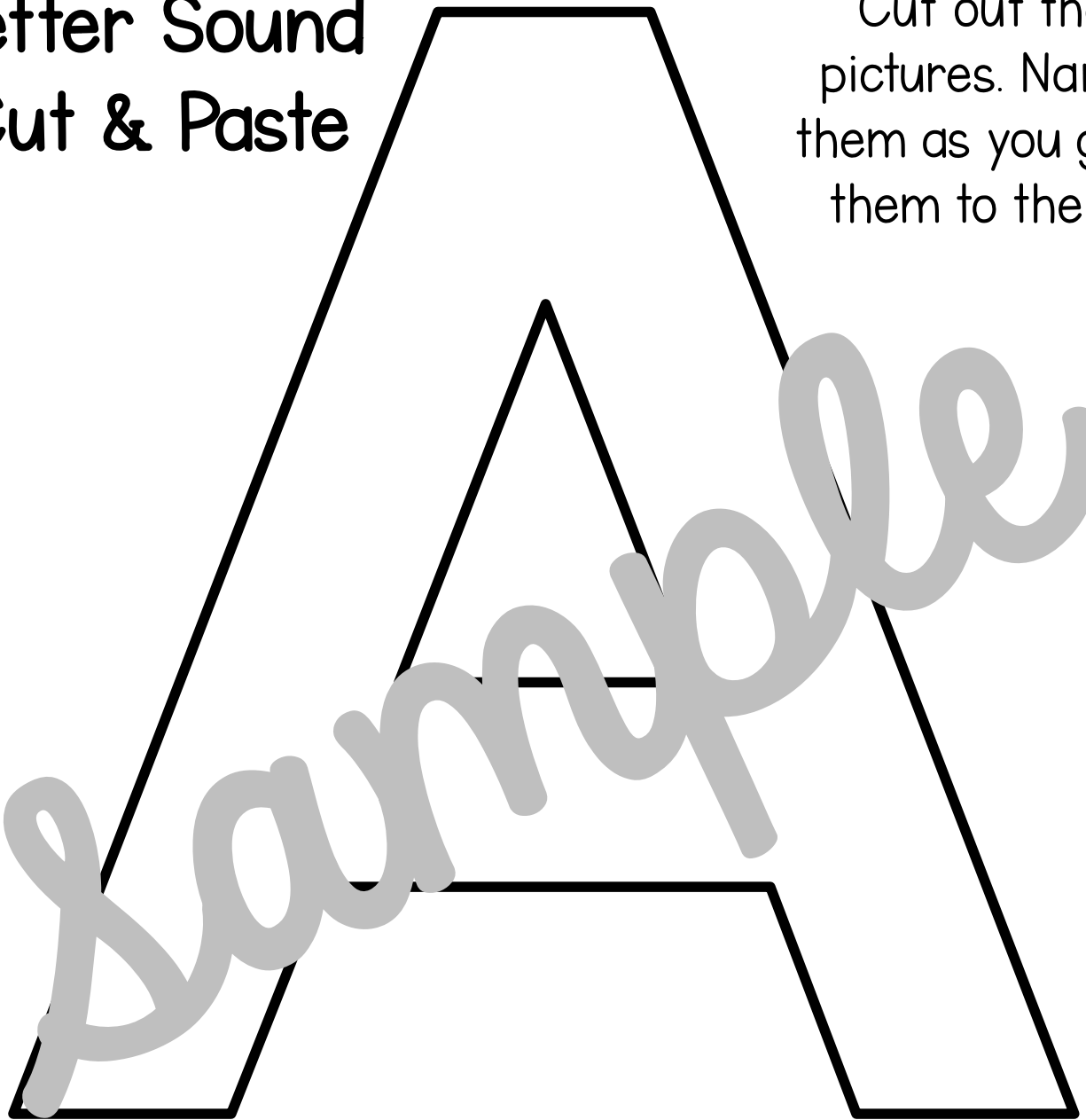
apple



abacus

Letter Sound Cut & Paste

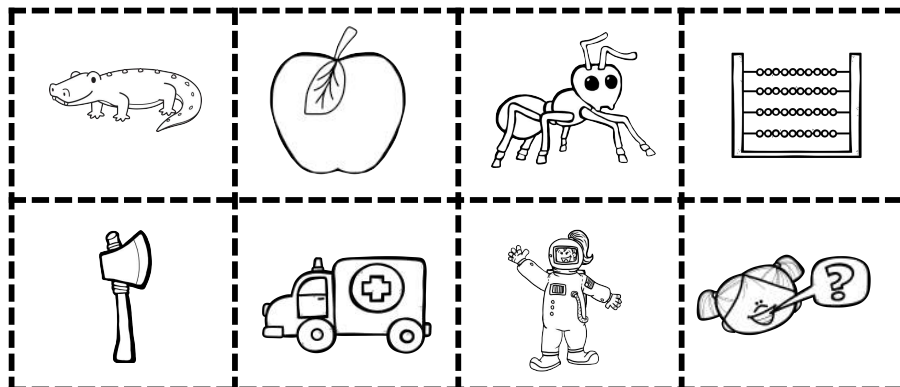
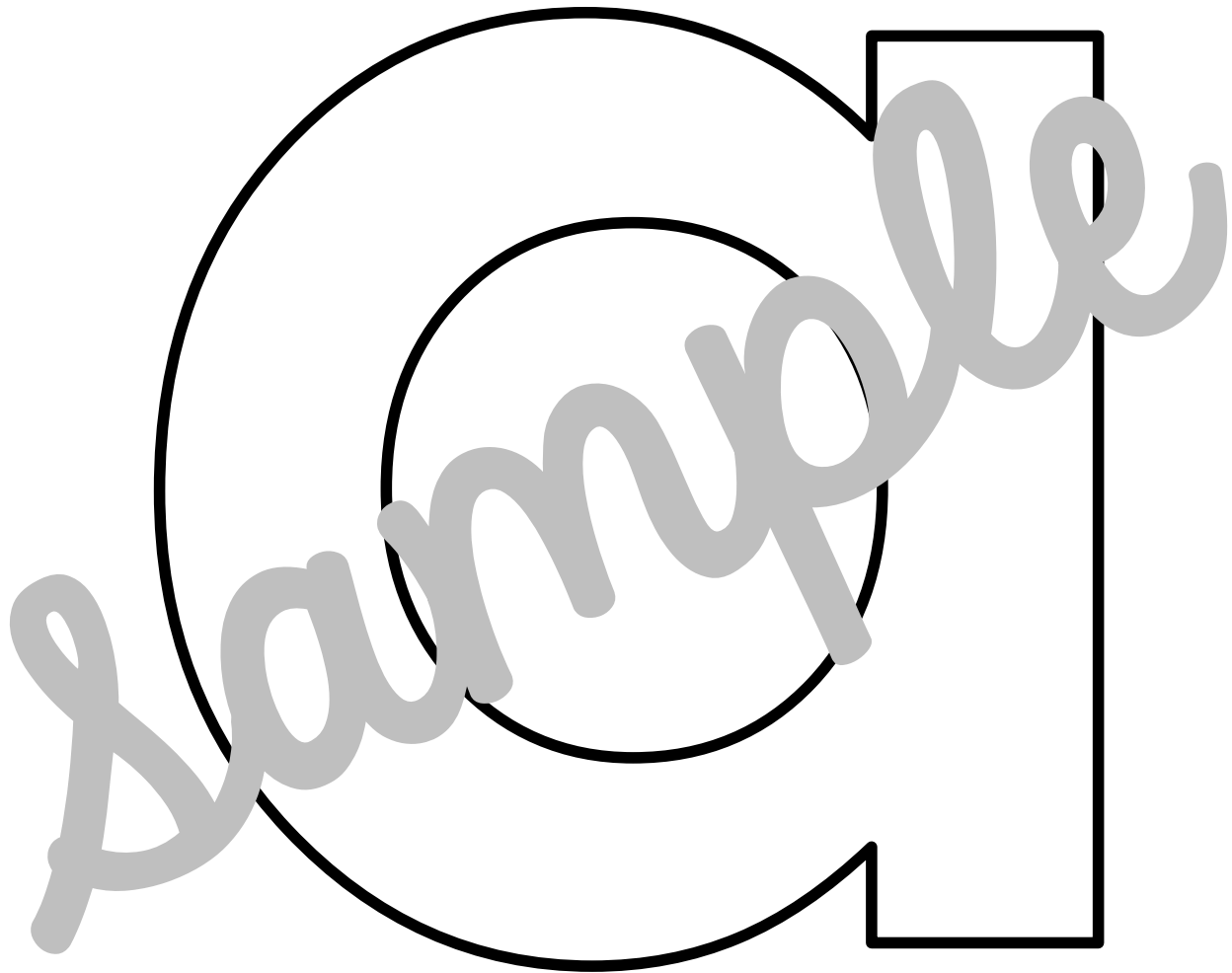
Cut out the
pictures. Name
them as you glue
them to the A.



Picture Key: alligator, apple, ant, abacus, ax, ambulance, astronaut, ask

Letter Sound Cut & Paste

Cut out the pictures. Name them as you glue them to the a.

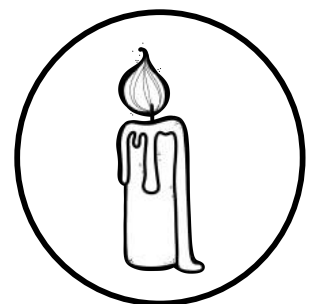
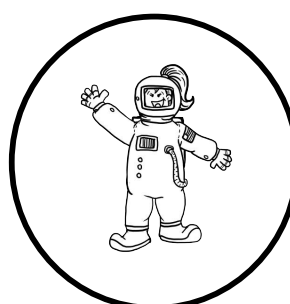
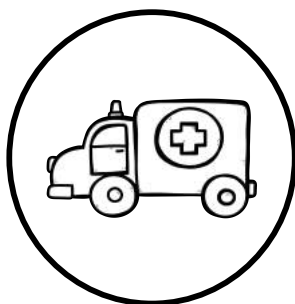
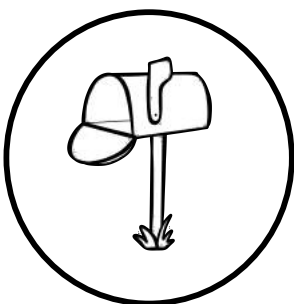
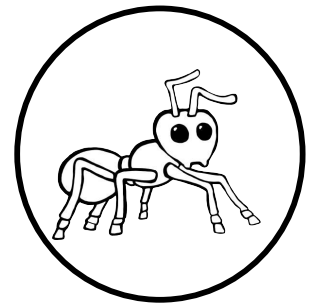
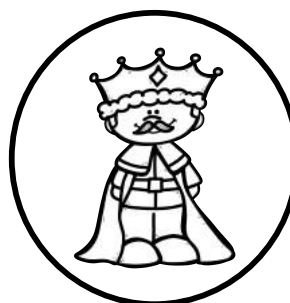
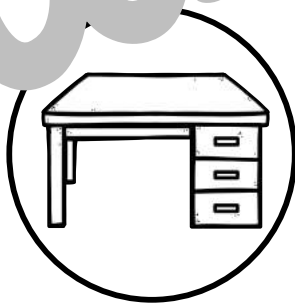
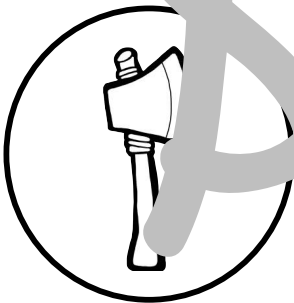
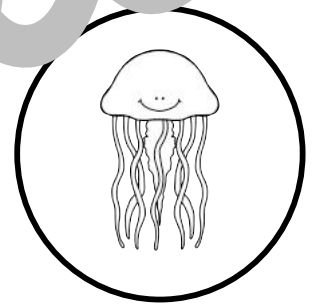
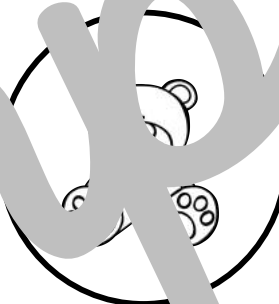
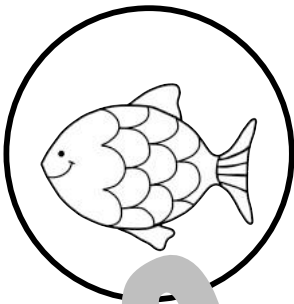
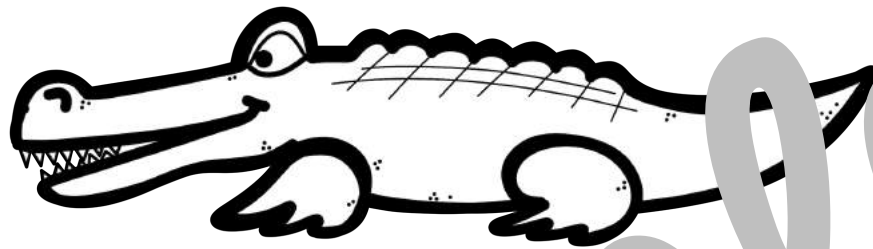


Picture Key: alligator, apple, ant, abacus, ax, ambulance, astronaut, ask

© Anna Geiger - Letter of the Week Curriculum – themeasuredmom.com

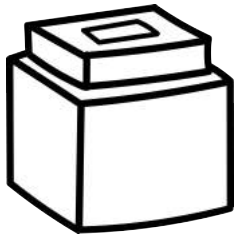
Letter Aa Sound Cover

Say the name of each picture. Listen to the first sound. Does it start with the /ă / sound? Cover or color it.



Measuring Toy Animals

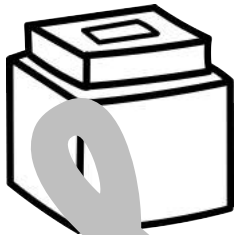
Guess how many cubes long each animal is. Then measure!
A grown-up can help you fill in the blanks.



How many cubes long is the _____?

My guess: _____ cubes

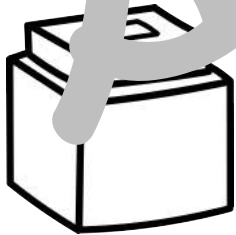
The actual length is _____ cubes.



How many cubes long is the _____?

My guess: _____ cubes

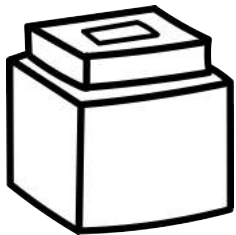
The actual length is _____ cubes.



How many cubes long is the _____?

My guess: _____ cubes

The actual length is _____ cubes.



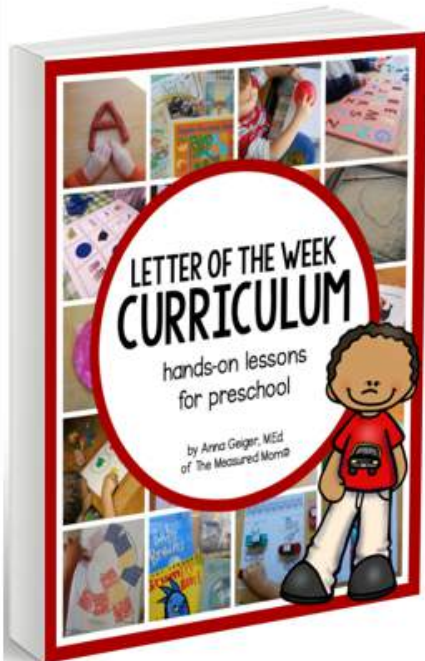
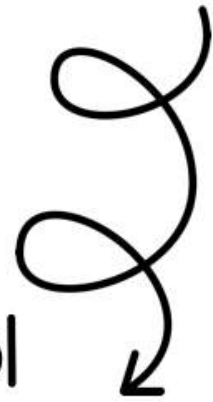
How many cubes long is the _____?

My guess: _____ cubes

The actual length is _____ cubes.

Letter of the Week

curriculum for preschool



W
Day 2

1) My Ww Book

Print, cut apart, and staple My Ww Book (pages 214-215). Read it to your child. Point to the words as you read them, encourage your child to "read" it back to you.

To assemble, glue pages to each other. Then cut across the horizontal center. Fold to make books on the fold with a string with buttons.

2) Alphabet soup

Fill a large pot about 2/3 full of water and add food coloring if you'd like. Give your child brown markers, beads and spoons, and a knife. Invite him to make alphabet soup! monthly theme-related activities, but be sure to talk about the letters in the photos.

3) "W is for well" do a dot

Print the W is for well page (page 213) and give your learners dot markers. Offer you markers, or another round manipulatives to fill in the circles.

5) Read and create a watermelon craft

After reading The Watermelon Seed, by Greg Pizzoli, create a watermelon craft plate. Cut the plate in half. Then paint the rind green and the inside red. When an adult draws lines on red watermelon seeds.

Parking Lot Beginning Sounds

My Pp Book

Trace it!

popcorn

pear

the measured mom

BUY NOW